

Remarks

Claims 1-4; and 7-12 are currently pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 and 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and claims 7 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claim 1 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. The Office Action also objects to claim 2 as being dependant on itself.

Claim 1 has been amended to introduce the limitation that the connector comprises “a housing closed at one end by a plate and having at the other end an annular ring that is movable towards the plate only when the connector is connected to the valve to provide an aperture through which fluid can pass into and through the connector.” Basis for this amendment can be found at paragraphs [0020] and [0021] of the application as published. Claim 1 is also amended to claim a “coil spring” instead of a “resilient means”.

Claim 2 has been amended to depend from claim 1.

Applicant hereby submits the above amendments in response to the rejections in the outstanding final Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests they be entered and the rejections withdrawn.

Claim Objections

Applicant has address the Examiner's objection and has amended claim 2 to depend from claim 1. Applicant respsectfully requests that this ground of objection now be withdrawn

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicant has amended claim 1 to replace “resilient means” with “coil spring”.
Applicant respectfully requests that this ground of rejection now be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-4 and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Norkey et al (US Patent No. 5,054,743). Norkey does not disclose a valve having a separable connector that comprises a housing closed at one end by a plate and having at the other end an annular ring that is movable towards the plate only when the connector is connected to the valve to provide an aperture through which fluid can pass into and through the connector, as recited in claim 1 currently amended.

Rather, the feature 24 considered by the Examiner to be equivalent to a separable connector merely comprises an open-ended conduit member that provides a fluid passageway. This conduit member is inserted into the housing member in such a way as to engage with the flange portion 54 to displace the flange past the retaining leg portions and open the fluid passageway (column 4 line 66 to column 5 line 5).

Thus, Applicant requests that the above ground for rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 1 and claims 2-4 and 8-11, which depend from claim 1.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 7 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norkey in view of Nimberger et al. (US Patent No. 5215120).

As discussed above, Norkey does not disclose a valve having a separable connector that comprises a housing closed at one end by a plate and having at the other end an annular ring that is movable towards the plate only when the connector is connected to the valve to provide an aperture through which fluid can pass into and through the connector, as recited in claim 1 currently amended and therefore in claims 7 and 12 which depend therefrom. Nimberger fails to cure the deficiency of Norkey.

Unlike the prior art, the present invention has been designed specifically for military application. The valve mechanism and connector as claimed are able to be used in hostile environments and particularly in environments where, without proper protection, contamination of water with harmful and dangerous chemicals is highly likely. Each end of the connector itself remains sealed to prevent any fluid contamination of the fluid passage of the connector right up

until the point when the connector is inserted into the valve. This is vital in such military application.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the above amendments be entered and favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-4, 7-12 is solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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